

Submission from MinEx to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) consultation on simplifying New Zealand qualifications and other credentials

11 June 2021

MinEx

MinEx is the national Health and Safety Council for New Zealand's extractives sector – the mining, quarrying and tunneling industry. Our principal purpose is to help the industry achieve its goal to be free from fatalities, injuries and diseases. We also play an active role alongside our industry partners the Aggregate and Quarry Association, Straterra, Institute of Quarrying, and AusIMM in improving vocational education in the extractives sector.

We make the following submissions in relation to the [consultation document](#) on simplifying New Zealand qualifications and credentials.

General comments

We believe Workforce Development Councils (WDC) need to work collaboratively with industry and providers to set standards, develop qualifications and help shape the delivery of vocational education. As one of 223 industries covered by the Manufacturing, Engineering and Logistics Workforce Development Council (MELT), we are concerned that we may not be afforded the opportunity to have the input necessary to ensure qualifications and credentials reflect the needs of our sector.

We currently have limited influence on provider-based vocational programmes and do not believe that graduates who have undertaken provider-based study have the technical and transferrable skills and knowledge they need to succeed in our workplaces. It is therefore important that these reforms deliver improved outcomes for both learners and employers.

Proposal 1: Ensuring that vocational qualifications meet the needs of students and employers

Consultation question 1.1:

We support Option B as we believe industry needs to be engaged in the development and review of qualifications and skill standards which would result in productivity gains and more focused engagement. We also see this option as providing for more influence by industry in the delivery of education.

While we acknowledge that this option will require additional time and resource investment, it will deliver better outcomes and it is important that the “right” amount of time is taken to ensure employer needs are met.

Consultation question 1.3:

For Option B, we support the establishment of groups comprising WDC, training providers and industry representatives to develop the ‘national curriculum’ (or core content) for each industry sector. This group would not need to be large (6-8 people) but would need to contain people with an understanding of the skills, knowledge and attributes required of graduates in the industry sector. Our Association would be happy to provide industry experts to work on this collaborative group.

The Resource and Infrastructure Industry (RII) training package for our sector in Australia was developed in a similar way and delivered an excellent outcome for learners, employers and training providers in this industry sector.

Proposal 2: Training schemes and micro-credentials

Consultation question 2.1:

We fully support the proposal to replace training schemes with micro-credentials as it will simplify education products and make it easier for learners and employers to engage in and understand the value of smaller packages of learning.

Proposal 3: Enabling micro-credentials to be developed by WDCs for providers to deliver

Consultation question 3.1:

We support further legislative change separating approval from accreditation of micro-credentials, which will enable WDCs to develop micro-credentials for use by providers. This will both simplify the approval process for micro-credentials and give greater flexibility for employers to choose providers for delivery of packages of learning.

Consultation question 3.3:

WDCs should be able to seek NZQA approval of micro-credentials for providers to deliver (subject to NZQA accreditation). If the collaborative approach in Proposal 1 is followed, then logically micro-credential development will occur through these processes, and it would then seem logical that the WDC seek approval for such micro-credentials that a number of providers can deliver.

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